PUBLIC OPINION

IN THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES ABOUT THE UNITED NATIONS

The United Nations Department of Public Information commissioned a public opinion poll in the United Arab Emirates to assess the awareness, knowledge and image of the United Nations. The poll was conducted during February and March 1992.

THE RESULTS IN BRIEF

- Almost half of the people of the United Arab Emirates give the UN a positive rating.
- Eighty-five per cent of the respondents say they are aware of the United Nations.
- Nearly two thirds of the people polled can name agencies, bodies and/or institutions of the UN.

UN PERFORMANCE RATING

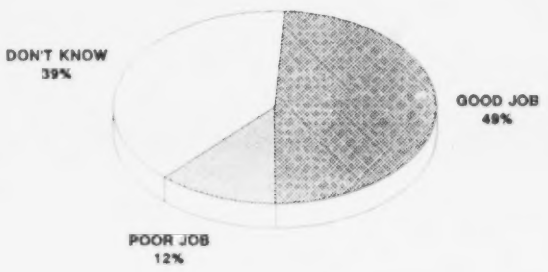

FIGURE 1

RATING UN PERFORMANCE

By a margin of four to one, the citizens of the United Arab Emirates give the United Nations a positive performance rating compared to those who give it a negative evaluation.

Respondents with a secondary and/or a university education (60 per cent) compared to respondents without a formal/elementary education (23 per cent) positively rate the UN's performance. However, in terms of occupation, there are twice as many professionals than unskilled workers who offer a poor evaluation of the UN.

IDENTIFYING THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL

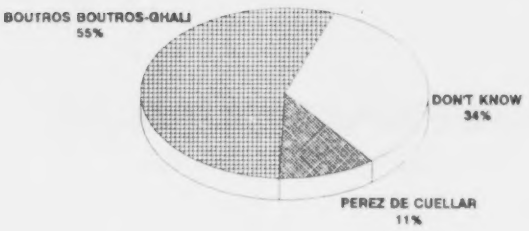

FIGURE 2

AWARENESS OF THE UNITED NATIONS

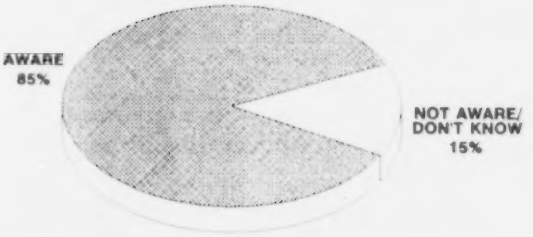

FIGURE 3

REASONS FOR UN PERFORMANCE

The role of the UN in peacemaking, disaster relief and the assistance it gives to developing nations are the main reasons for a positive assessment.

The people of the United Arab Emirates who say the UN is doing a poor job say the UN is too much under the influence of big powers, and it has failed in its efforts to solve crises such as in Kashmir and the former Yugoslavia.

IDENTIFICATION OF THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL

Fifty-five per cent of those surveyed can identify Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali as the current Secretary-General from the list of office-holders.

The Secretary-General is better-known among those with a secondary/or university education than among those with lower levels of education. He is also better-known among those who are employed in the managerial and professional ranks compared to those who are employed in the unskilled labor force.

AWARENESS AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE UN

Eighty-five percent of the people of the United Arab Emirates know of the United Nations. As level of education increase, so do levels of awareness of the United Nations. For example, awareness of the UN is higher among those with a university education (99 per cent) than among those with elementary training or no formal education (62 per cent). The same holds true in the occupational category, awareness of the UN is greater among professionals (98 per cent) than among the unskilled (66 per cent).

Almost two thirds of those surveyed can name United Nations' agencies, bodies and institutions. UNICEF, WHO and UNESCO are among the agencies most well-known. Again, stratification of knowledge of these agencies falls along educational and occupational lines.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Nearly three fourths of the respondents cite television as the main source of information about the United Nations. Almost two-thirds of those polled say newspapers, followed by one third who say radio is their primary source of information.

Forty per cent of the respondents recall being taught about the United Nations at school. Twenty-eight per cent of those polled say most teaching about the UN takes place at high school.

INTEREST IN UN ISSUES

Human rights is the primary UN issue of interest to more than half of the respondents. International peace and security, welfare of the children, AIDS and drug abuse are also areas about which the respondents would like to receive more information.

Overall, the people surveyed express little interest in issues related to international law and treaties, the international debt crisis, anti-apartheid, decolonization and African economic recovery.

ABILITY TO NAME A UN INSTITUTION

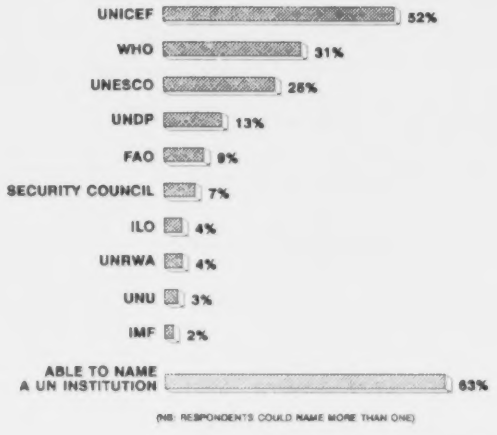

FIGURE 4

SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON THE UN

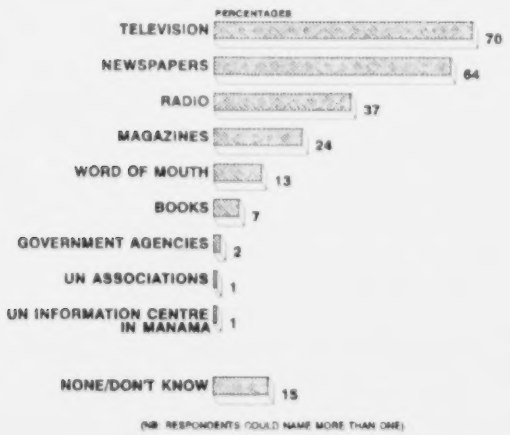

FIGURE 5

TEACHING ABOUT THE UNITED NATIONS

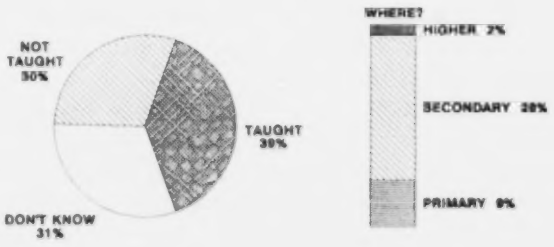

FIGURE 6

INTEREST IN UNITED NATIONS ISSUES

	VERY INTERESTED %	SOMEWHAT INTERESTED %	NOT INTERESTED %
HUMAN RIGHTS	56	27	17
INT'L PEACE AND SECURITY	48	32	20
CHILDREN'S ISSUES	45	38	17
AIDS	44	40	16
DRUG ABUSE	43	36	21
CRIME PREVENTION	42	37	21
WORLD FOOD PROBLEMS	41	34	25
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	39	36	25
EQUAL RIGHTS FOR WOMEN	38	36	26
REFUGEES & DISASTER RELIEF	37	39	24
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	36	32	32
RACIAL DISCRIMINATION	32	35	34
POPULATION ISSUES	30	37	33
TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT	29	41	30
THE WORK OF THE UN IN GENERAL	26	46	28
DISARMAMENT	24	38	38
IMPROVING HOUSING CONDITIONS	21	35	44
NEW WORLD INFORMATION ORDER	21	32	47
INT'L LAW AND TREATIES	18	39	43
INT'L DEBT CRISIS	16	36	48
APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICA	11	38	51
DECOLONIZATION	8	34	58
AFRICAN ECONOMIC RECOVERY	7	34	59

FIGURE 7

HOW THE POLL WAS DONE

The poll was conducted in the United Arab Emirates Market Research Organization (MRO) based in Amman, Jordan. A representative sample of 1005 adult men and women were interviewed. The interviews were conducted face-to-face in the respondents' homes during February and March 1992. The margin of sampling error is estimated at ± 3 per cent.

The Programme Evaluation and Communication Research Unit of the United Nations Department of Public Information undertakes public opinion polls to "analyse trends of public opinion throughout the world about the activities of the United Nations and the extent to which an informed understanding of the work of the United Nations is being secured". General Assembly resolution 13(1), paragraph 13, Annex 1 of 13 February 1946.

CONCLUSION

A majority of the people of the United Arab Emirates know of the United Nations and more than half of those polled give the UN a favorable rating. Nearly two thirds of the people surveyed can name UN agencies, bodies and institutions. While television is the primary source of information about the UN among most of the respondents, it is closely followed by newspapers. Human rights tops the list of UN issues about which most respondents expressed an interest.

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